

BALLET

today

ONE SHILLING



AUGUST 1954

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA

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HEIRESS

Ballet today

The National Dance Monthly

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PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

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Preview..

THE British Soviet Friend-
ship Society secretary, Pat
Sloane, has written me the
most insulting letter of my
month's mail. He suggests that
my criticism of the recent appear-
ance at the Stoll of the Beryoska
Ensemble was not made on
artistic, but upon political
grounds.

Running a society with such a
name, Mr. Sloane should at least
read the British magazines and
press. He would not find me, in
my writing, politically biased at
all. I take it he means a bias
against Russians?

How then explain the series I
am now running on ballet in
Russia?

PLAUSIBLE

Or is a letter from such an
organisation not supposed to be
any more plausible than the
propaganda of those who make
up the Communist Party?

Mr. Sloane will find the Soviet
Embassy has my co-operation.
But these normal Russians expect
a give-and-take of opinion. They
do not scamper after innuendos
and cheap insults when a word
of blame is heard. Perhaps Mr.
Sloane has been spoiled by too
frequent a contact with dance
magazines who follow the party
line more loyally than they
represent ballet.

Wise after the fact of Burns,
neither praise nor insult can mar
the taste of my breakfast. My
daily mail runs to an average
fifty or sixty letters. Some are
regular correspondents like the
lunatic in outer London who
sends a parchment scroll of



Australian dancer Audrey Nicholls who joined the Ballet Rambert in 1953 and made an impression during the Rambert season at Sadlers Wells Theatre, see page four.
(Photo Mike Davis)

obscene attack on my work on
the first of each month.

NO BETTER

Every magazine and newspaper
has these cranks to contend with
—most of us share the same ones.
But what do they get out of it?
There is no criticism of a maga-
zine better than cancelling your
subscription. There is no praise
better than taking one out. The
position with **BALLET TODAY**
is that very few have criticized
us in this practical way, and a

great many have been good
enough to praise us in this very
useful way!

But why side with the neurotic
fringe and write epithet letters.
Send the price of the stamp to a
children's home and at least do
2½d worth of good. I think this
will be of more value than writing
insulting letters to editors who
are all too used to their mail to
worry about who next threatens
them with eternal damnation.

It's too far away. The dead-
line is so much nearer!

—AND ON THE COVER

Svetlana Beriosova in a new
portrait by Mike Davis, the
brilliant London photographer
whose work will now appear
regularly in **BALLET TODAY**.
Mike Davis, whose exhibition ran
at the Camera Club last month,
is married, with two sons. He is
not only an expert photographer
—many people are—but has a
talent for the unusual, and a
“let's-get-something-better”
patience which might be called
perfectionism—or merely doing
a job as well as it can be done.
BALLET TODAY is happy to
have him join us.

FROM OUT OF THE VACUUM

SUCH ballets as Jack Carter's *Loveknots* for the Rambert season at Sadler's Wells are not merely bad. They insult the audience by their patent disbelief that the audience has even a basic intelligence. The crux of Carter's plot is a letter misdirected. I can think of ten ways of conveying this on stage. What does Carter do? He has his cavalier point out the girl who is to receive the letter—and pointed out clearly. And, two yards away, the messenger takes the letter and gives it to a totally different girl. Ludicrous. But does the girl who knew the letter was to come to her do anything to stop this passage? No. She goes on dancing. "Oh, woe," cries the messenger, when he realises a few seconds later that he has given the letter to a girl of completely different appearance, colouring and costume.

Now how could he have done that?

My daughter might accept this from the prodigious Enid Blyton. But Mr. Carter must not expect me to accept his plot. And no audience in the world is more criminal than that which applauds politely and out of friendship.

Rambert needs no friends to say "charming" of her work. She has great achievement behind her, a good company and an excellent repertoire.

She can do without polite cheers. So can ballet.

Apart from the ludicrous plot, Carter was also handicapped (surely he knew?) by having a masked ball theme recently exploited well by Cranko.

The programme note ends: "..."



Beryl Goldwyn
as Giselle

and leaving perhaps a little sadness."

An understatement.

MUSIC: VERDI.

OF course it is unfair to take a devoted Ballo in Mascera enthusiast and sit him in front of a ballet which uses "Music: Verdi (orchestrated by Leonard Salzedo)" which in turn comes out as melody after melody from Ballo and other Verdi.

If Jack Carter's *The Life and Death of Lola Montez* is petite Petit, it is at least a highly entertaining, swift, well-decorated and witty ballet which will become a leading attraction in the Rambert repertoire.

This is no major ballet, but it is important. It proves that Carter can devise and hold together a well-made ballet which the public will find to their taste. That, today, is highly important.

Norman McDowell has made an excellent job of both decor and costumes. Some of the girls' dresses are very lovely, and the tone throughout is bright and lively.

Anne Lascelles has a part role as Lola and carries it well. Alexander Bennett was rather unsure but most times competent, sometimes much more. Mary Munro was not good—she was wonderful. A complete departure for her and one that worked.

I found the courtroom scene one of the best choreographically and of course the Spider Dance which had more awareness of the facets of attraction than most choreographers seem to possess. The Golden West sequence was also good. I can find little to complain of

except that choreographer Jack Carter still has to mount his ballets for small companies and even then after experimental runs. If his ballet can rock Sadler's Wells Theatre with laughter, I fail to see why it meets an ice-eye from the Sadler's Wells Ballet directorate.

During the evening during which *Lola Montez* was presented, Beryl Goldwyn repeated her Odette in *Lac*, act two. This is a digested *Swan Lake* but served Alexander Bennett and Beryl Goldwyn well. She has a beautiful, lithe swinging line and especially towards the end showed a defiant strength which made worse the dirge that was going on around her.

Goldwyn could be a very great dancer if she were taught dynamics as a plus in dancing. I have never seen a more promising performance.

CRANKO'S VARIATIONS

I SUPPOSE that to object to the long line of frustrated lover ballets is to object to the modern choreographer and his environment. But objection there has to be.

May we have it clearly: in normal life boy meets girl and nine times out of ten he gets girl. Only in psychopaths or others of varying mental aberration do we get frustrated, morbid and eventually suicidal neurotics.

Must every ballet which introduces young love, immediately introduce every cliché in the degenerate book? I recently watched four short ballets in one evening—no less than three of the four pictured frustrated love.

This is unhealthy nonsense.

Variations on a Theme, the new John Cranko ballet for Rambert, has the theme as before, but no variations which are immediately obvious. The lovers (or a semblance of them), the split, the frustrated groping, the death, the suicidal chain-thee-to-me-and-let's-die-together roundgame which is the final curtain. All so ordinary, so expectable.

If Hollywood has been damned for the last reel cliché-cliché, at least this was normal desire, normal outcome. But this degenerate lovelorn is sickening in its regularity.

The tragedy here is that Cranko has buried his undoubted talent beneath a string of clichés dictated by his choreographic companions. Why should he? Why should the applause for his ballet mean anything to him—did he stay to hear the thunderous,



Ballet in Review

by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

floor-stamping tumult of reaction for Mary Munro's performance in *Winter Night*?

Why did *Winter Night* achieve this reaction? Simply because it pictures a normal situation. The cast-off lover grappling to win back her lover. Here was no bowed-head-and-give-it-up pessimism... the girl fights for her love to the last curtain. The audience, appreciating a marital triangle common to all marriage, feels attached to the problem and is vitally affected.

Cranko's ballet affected nobody. And that is its death-knell. And only that. The music was glaringly suited to good ballet (Britten, arranged by Bernard), the decor by Kenneth Rowell is the best, now, on the Rambert stage. The dancers worked well.

But there was no ballet worth the working.

Rowell's luminous batswings and pastel-chaos backcloths were excellent. They achieved on stage the effect of those few modern artists who demand that the viewer mixes the colours made available. And Rowell avoided the heaviness which such a mixture often reveals. His is the first approach I have seen in this country to the wonderful heights of theatrical fancy prevalent in the best French scenists' work. I found the decor here impressive, theatrical and a concrete proof that Rowell has that unEnglish quality: flair.

Britten's music will, I am sure be used again for a ballet. Perhaps I could miss out the word again. And Cranko himself can do far better than this.

I hope he does.

The Young Man of Alexander Bennett, Child of Noreen Sopwith and various parts by Anne Lascelles, Audrey Nicholls, Mary Munro and Ann Horn were well-danced. Nicholl's Flame Lady especially stood out as a

—To next page

Beriosova

It is somewhat disappointing, (although grand to have them both at the major Wells company) that since David Blair's transfer we have not had the pleasure of seeing him partner Svetlana Beriosova.

These brilliant dancers, on the threshold of great careers, gave us many thrilling and unforgettable hours of wonderful entertainment at Rosebery Avenue.

They seem so ideally suited. Both have in common, besides technical skill, that great personal magnetism which captivates audiences; fine dramatic ability, perfect timing, and a delightful sense of comedy.

We wonder whether we might possibly see them in the near future, forming another exciting ballet partnership.

Perhaps it will not be long before a star of Beriosova's magnitude is given the official standing of Prima Ballerina, a rank she holds in all but billing.

M. Blake (Miss)

117 Melrose Avenue, N.W.2.

—From previous page

bravura role well suited to this vivacious young dancer of whom I have more to say.

Beryl Goldwyn's Lady was perhaps, the only lovely thing in the ballet apart from one or two stage tricks which were effective.

OTHER BALLETS

A PART from the three new ballets, *Winter Night* was again danced by Mary Munro, Alexander Bennett and Noreen Sopwith. The phonograph recording becomes more surface and less sound every time I hear it, but this ballet remains the finest achievement in the Rambert repertoire. Walter Gore's one masterpiece.

Mary Munro diminishes everything else of the evening to insignificance and mere futile cleverness. The dancer I accompanied during this evening turned to me while watching Munro and said two words:

"An artist."

And that is all there is to say.

One other girl is to be mentioned Audrey Nicholls. She outstands from the drabs around her whenever she is upon the stage. In *Gala Performance* she shows her full talent for demi-character and youthfully, wickedly humorous roles.

She is an attractive, strong dancer with a comedic sense and an attitude of "it's fun" that might win her a very real following. Again the tragedy is that she might be environment-slid into mere competence. But, right now, her eyes are on the heights.

As they should be.



My Photograph of the Month by

Serge Lido

● Natalie Krassovska who is dancing at Festival Hall this month.

The Double Vision

Text: ANTHONY LOVEDAY

Drawings: JUDAH

THE choreographer is a creative artist and he in common with artists in other mediums, is necessarily sensitive to the emotional and mental climate of his period.

Today this climate is pervaded with conflicts, problems and uncertainties that have become aggravated by the acceptance of the psychological dogmas, new religions, and scientific discoveries. The impact of all this upon the choreographer will stimulate him, probably unconsciously, into a course of creative activity. Either he will recoil from the problems around him, and seeking protection in the world of his creations he will try to find security in his escape from reality, or else he will faithfully record and express the conflicts of his generation through the medium of the dance, hoping by this means to achieve the "Catharsis" of the Greek trage-

dians, and perhaps discover solutions to the problems which oppress him.

The ballet provides double opportunities for such escapism: either the choreographer can look for security in the rigid discipline of abstract classicism, or he may seek release by lulling his anxieties and fears into forgetfulness in a fantasy world of illusion and make-believe.

In the works of Balanchine we find attempts at the former. *Symphony in C* and *Ballet Imperial* provide examples of classicism in its most stringently pure form, while his humour and high spirits flow out in the mirthful classical choreography of *Bourree Fantasque*; and the world of legend has been treated in a similarly classical manner in *Orpheus* with its billowing white curtains that borrow so much from Jean Cocteau.

HEARTSEASE

But many choreographers have sought their heartsease through the portrayal of contemporary problems in "Ballets d'Actualites." Of these choreographers perhaps the two most notable are working in America: Antony Tudor and Jerome Robbins.

Tudor, while working in England in 1936, produced *Jardin aux Lilas* in which he contrasts the emotional conflicts of the three main characters—Caroline the Wife to Be, Her Lover, and The Man She Must Marry. Here is a truly human tragedy danced amidst the sickly scented atmosphere of a summer's evening. The aching unhappiness of Caroline heightened by this sultry scene becomes at time almost insupportable, so strongly is her particular tragedy conveyed.

In *Pillar of Fire* the tragedy of Hagar, the frustrated woman whose unrequited adoration leads her to give herself to one she does not love, is etched in a similarly crystal manner that is no less true to life. One may not actually know people like these but, while her tragedy is danced on the stage, the feeling of the uneasiness of truth persist, so truly does it draw from life.

Robbins too is a tractarian, making his subtle comments upon our times. In *Facsimile* he criticises the restless type of individual who constantly seeks for outside sources of entertainment, and who never looks within himself for contentment; as a result he suffers from the frustrations that only boredom and an empty mind alone with itself can bring.

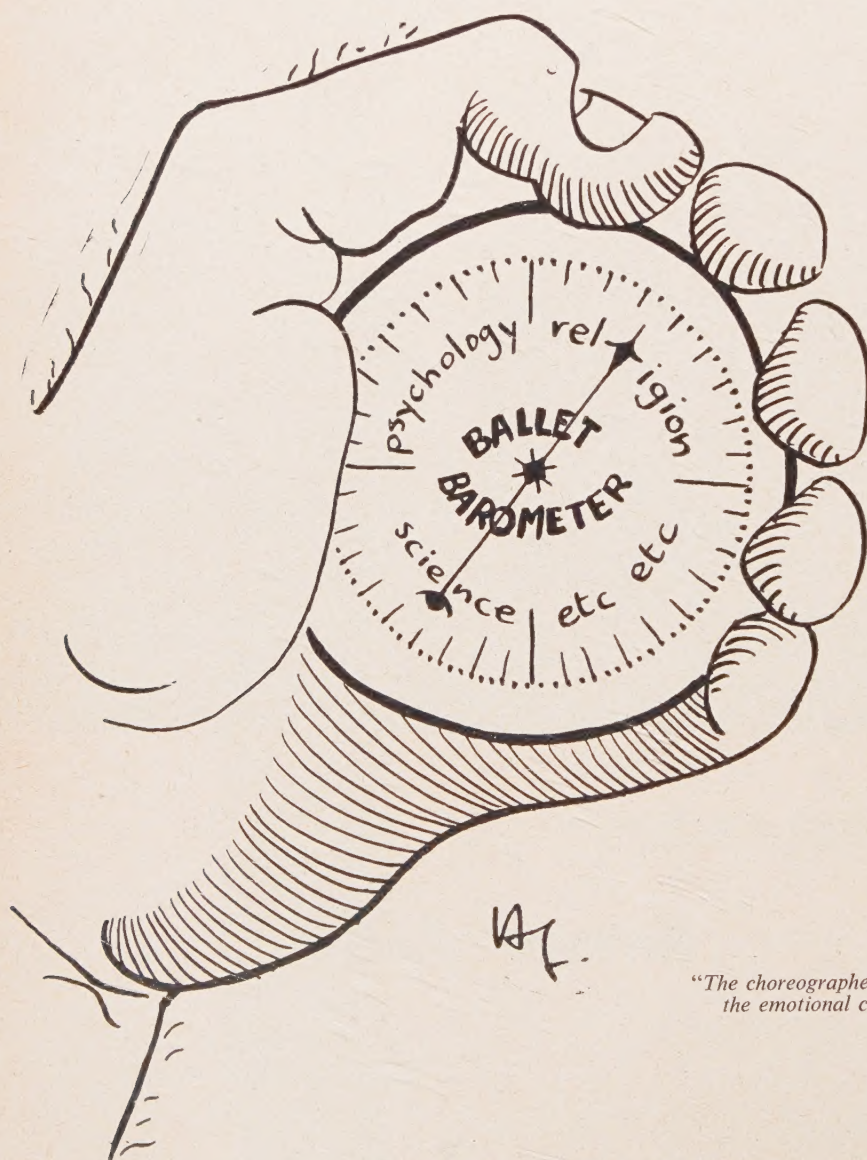
The Guests is conceived on a broader canvas, but is equally opposite to the affairs and conditions of men today with its portrayal of Group conflicts, and he graphically shows in this ballet the results of rebellious outbreaks by individuals in attempts to defy the Taboos of their society. Within the tenets laid down by Robbins and Tudor in these ballets there can be not other solution to the situations portrayed.

PROMISING?

So far I have mentioned only choreographers who appear to work predominantly either in the field of the Escapist Ballet or in that of the Ballet d'Actualites—a single vision, in effect.

But it is in the works of the young South African, John Cranko, that a double vision is to be found; for he has fused a vision of fairyland with the psychological studies of reality that have recently become his speciality.

For too long he has been termed "promising" and his full merit has not yet been fully acknowledged. The first ballet he composed in this country



"The choreographer is sensitive to the emotional climate"

CANADA is a land of opportunity but the artistic scope is very limited. However, with the ever-increasing popularity of television, viewers are offered excellent opera and ballet which they might not otherwise get in their small community.

One such person who is helping to popularise ballet on TV is a young dancer named Joan Williscroft, of Montreal. With a few tempting offers from New York, Joan finds working at home can be just as pleasant, and lucrative. She has taken part in several full-length ballets which have been produced on TV from Montreal, with more in the offing. From time to time, Joan is also asked to appear in variety shows on Montreal's French network in which she does her own choreography.

VERSATILE

Besides her frequent appearance on TV, she has a regular job dancing in a theatre which presents two all-star variety shows a day. Each week the show takes on a new theme which gives Joan an opportunity to show her versatility. For instance one week she may be a can-can dancer and the next a sylphide and so on.

Dancing is foremost in Joan's life and there is not much occasion for social activities but she will have plenty of time for that, as she is only 20. She started dancing at an early age with some of Montreal's better-known teachers and continued studying in New York. An offer to dance in the Annual Canadian Ballet Festival in 1952 brought her back to Montreal where she has remained ever since.



Dancer from the Land of Snow, Beavers and Oil Wells

*Joan Williscroft fixes her shoe
before a television performance of
L'Ineffable M. Triquet.*

*The ballroom scene of the TV
production of Cinderella. Joan
Williscroft is in the centre fore-
ground.*



GALINA ULANOVA:

HAD YOU asked me this question during our sojourn in Paris, I would most probably have been unable to answer it, for when the French Premier M. Laniel informed our Ambassador that the Soviet ballet performances had been indefinitely postponed we ourselves were puzzled and at a loss to understand the reason. It was certainly not the "impossibility to ensure the safety of the Soviet artists," the official explanation given.

What I saw in Paris after the announcement of the government's decision convinced me that M. Laniel's explanation could scarcely be the real one.

"Why I did not dance in Paris"

SORRY

I recalled the recent performances of the Comedie Francaise in Moscow, the hearty reception the Soviet public had accorded the talented representatives of the Maison de Moliere, and was genuinely sorry that my friends and I were denied the possibility to acquaint Parisians with our art. Incidentally, we could see that the French regretted it no less, as the following incident shows.

Parisians learned of the French government's actual ban on our concerts half an hour before our first appearance when the Opera was already filled to capacity. And how do you think the public reacted to the news? Crowds of people immediately made for our hotel, buying flowers for us on their way. The press, too, was unanimous in condemning the government's uncommendable pleasure.

FLIMSY

And every day until our departure delegates from various organisations, and enterprises, from different sections of the population, and simply private individuals visited us.

The flimsiness of the official excuse was quite obvious. Of whose unfriendly feelings could there be talk when the French authorities took us to the airfield secretly, by a roundabout way to prevent us from saying goodbye to those who had wanted so much to see our performances. Even so, several hundred Parisians had gathered at the airfield to see us off. We were driven straight to the plane but they managed to get the permission of the police to allow at least those of them who had come with flowers to come over to us.

And to enable as many of them as possible to get through the police cordon the people began to divide up the flowers. After seeing this one can hardly seriously speak about any unfriendly feelings of the French people.



Rowena Jackson, Brian Ashbridge In Auckland

—and new ballets, reviewed by
HELEN DAVIDSON—

NO New Zealanders returning home have ever received a greater reception than Rowena Jackson and Bryan Ashbridge at the opening night of the Festival Ballet on June 7th. Applause filled the theatre for a full ten minutes after the final pas de deux.

For many years New Zealand audiences have had to be content with companies of poor to middling calibre, and it is all too seldom that dancers of world standing can be seen. The popularity of the event was mirrored by the bookings, which were completely sold out by noon of the opening day, and the short season of a week precluded many patrons from even one performance.

Had the dancing been different, these two young people would have received a warm welcome, but when the performance they gave was brilliant, they richly deserved the acclaim they received.

SENSITIVITY

The sensitivity and technique brought by Miss Jackson to the role of *Odette* was sufficient to lessen attention to the flaws in the rest of the dancing. It was a happy combination to couple this act with the *pas de deux* from the third act, which gave her scope to portray character, the malevolent power and exultation of *Odile* contrasting strongly with

the delicate poetry of *Odette*. Here were the precision and the delicate hand movements which so characterise all Jackson's dancing.

It seems hardly fair to draw comparisons between the corps de ballet, consisting of local and amateur dancers, with the trained corps from the Wells or Covent Garden. The corps danced with assurance, but lack of co-ordination in their arm movements marred an otherwise good performance.

ASHBRIDGE

To the male role Bryan Ashbridge brought dignity and strength, but had little opportunity to display his talents in a part calling for little more than mime and accompaniment. In the later *pas de deux*, however, the elevation of his first entrance, and his entrechats brought gasps of admiration from the audience.

The remainder of the programme was patchy. First *Motif* set to music of Cesar Franck's Symphonic Variations with choreography by Daphne Kirner, formerly ballerina of the

Metropolitan Ballet and London's Empire Ballet. This was an abstract piece of work, clothed in the most unflattering costumes against a surrealistic backdrop. The effect was gained by contrasts in line colour and design. It is questionable whether this work would ever achieve universal appeal or satisfaction, as it contains too many disunities, and the music (provided by a single piano) did little to help the dancers.

KIRNER

Auckland 1860 was set to music of Mendelssohn again with choreography by Daphne Kirner, this was a light-hearted piece which, despite the title, had little to do with Auckland apart from the back-drop with Rangitoto and a stray Maori dancer. The story which was an attempt to capture something of the atmosphere of the city in the middle of the 19th Century, was devised by Eric Westbrook, and deals with the typical pleasures of a sailor coming ashore. Carl Baker gave an energetic performance as the lieutenant who cannot choose between a young girl of good family, and one of the ladies of the town. Daphne

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REGRET

We know that the people of France sincerely regretted the whole thing. The attempt to hamper Soviet-French cultural exchange failed. On the contrary, it provoked an impressive demonstration of sympathy and love for the Soviet artists.

In concluding I would like to say that I still hope to appear before the French audience. And that will happen when the political barriers now standing in the way to international cultural intercourse are finally removed.

My trip to Paris has convinced me that the men and women of France, just like the people of my own country, want with all their heart to see culture serve the interests of friendship and peace among nations.

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NEXT MONTH

Festival Ballet

Full Review Supplement

IN RUSSIA NOW : 2

Young Moscow Dancers

by
**MIKHAIL
DOLGOPOLOV**



IN the last century the Russian theatre several times turned to Pushkin for subject-matter for its ballets. St. Petersburg saw the staging of *Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Bride's Shadow*, *Ruslan and Ludmila*, *The Downfall of the Wicked Wizard Chernomor*, and *The Little Gold Fish*.

It was natural that Soviet choreographers, too, should search for themes for their ballets in the works of the Russian poet. His *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* inspired the first "Pushkin" ballet of Soviet times, composed by Boris Asafiev, with libretto by Nikolai Volkov.

It will soon be 20 years since the day that the poetic images in *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* first came to life on the stage of the Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet (former Mariinsky Theatre) in Leningrad. The ballet was produced by Rostislav Zakharov. Through solo and mass dances that are highly interesting com-

positionally, through character delineation that is psychologically profound, the young ballet master succeeded in conveying the entire range of emotions contained in that romantic poem. Asafiev's music is sincerely lyrical for the dances of Maria and her lover Vaslav, temperamental and dramatically tense for those of the Tatar warriors Khan Girei and Zarema.

SUCCESS

The ballet proved a success from its very first performance, when the audience was carried away by the penetrating interpretation given Maria, the Khan's prisoner, by young Galina Ulanova, who had made her debut only five years before. Her lover, the Polish youth Vaslav, was danced by young Konstantin Sergeyev, one of our finest classical dancers in the lyric style. In that production Olga Iordan brought dramatic fire and spirit to her role of Zarema, the Khan's rejected wife.

Fountain of Bakhchisarai has stood the test of time. To this day it is performed regularly at the majority of the Soviet Union's ballet theatres.

A few weeks ago it was revived at the Bolshoi Theatre by its first producer, Rostislav Zakharov. The entire cast is composed of young people. The roles of Maria and Zarema went to two young dancers who had passed out of the school of ballet only two years ago—Marina Kondratieva and Lydia Shein.

It is a rule in the Soviet Theatre, and particularly in the ballet theatre, that young people who are assigned important roles should rehearse them under the direction of leading artists of the older generation. In the revival of *Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, Marina Kondratieva and Lydia Shein worked on their roles with the famous ballerina Marina Semyonova, while Vladimir Zakharov, who dances the Khan,

was given help with the role by Pyotr Gusev, the first to dance the Khan and today a ballet master and teacher. Alexander Plisetsky, who dances Vaslav, studied the part with Asaf Messerer, a dancer famous for his brilliant interpretation of the role.

The older dancers passed on to the younger generation the experience they had gained on the stage, and taught them how to find the best stage and dance interpretation of the characters in Pushkin's lovely poem. The public and critics agree that the Bolshoi Theatre's young dancers have infused the ballet with charming freshness.

TENDER

Marina Kondratieva is amazingly tender and lyrical as Maria. She portrays her suffering with poetry and restraint. Lydia Shein, who plays her rival, Zarema, is an artist with confident technique in the classical dance that is combined with dramatic power and expressiveness. Her appearance, together with her excellent training for this role, enable her to create a convincing, living Zarema.

As yet, Alexander Plisetsky has not found the colours needed to make his Vaslav come to life. He dances well, and gives his partner reliable support in their difficult pas de deux, but his interpretation lacks feeling and inspiration. Undoubtedly, as time goes on young Plisetsky will find ways of giving his character greater depth.

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Ballet as I see it

BY
FERNAU HALL

THE Editor of *BALLET TODAY* has asked me to write a regular column saying what I like about whatever interests me. I am glad to accept his invitation. But I must warn readers that in the space at my disposal I cannot analyse tendencies, influences and relationships as I have done in the 250,000 words of *An Anatomy of Ballet: I hope they will regard this column as a topical supplement to Anatomy.*

MISCASTING

It is hard for anyone who has not danced in a ballet company to realize the effect on standards of performance of the bad casting which is typical of our day. For every Fonteyn who gets the opportunities she deserves there are a hundred talented artists who get passed over in favour of dancers not worthy to tie up their shoes. A good many of the frustrated artists give up in despair; others keep on dancing, but without élan and without hope.

I don't blame these dancers: the dice are loaded against them. But I greatly admire a few highly talented dancers who keep their morale high, in spite of frustration, and seize every tiny opportunity that is given them.

The one I admire most of all is Julia Farron: she makes clear the meaning of a remark by Stanislavsky, "There are not small parts—only small actors." She made her debut in 1936, and ever since, whenever she has been given any sort of a chance, she has shown herself to have a remarkable combination of talents.

She has excellent musicality, a good sense of line, a strong dramatic sense, a striking personality and remarkable versatility; she is imaginative and highly intelligent; and she has the emotional power of a mature artist. She can build up a small part like the Neapolitan Dance in Act III of *Lac* until it stops the

show; as a leading Wili in *Giselle* she dances with such maturity and sense of atmosphere that one can hardly bear to look at a Queen of the Wilis like Rosemary Lindsay (all too obviously a nice girl who is doing her best).

On the very rare occasions when Julia Farron has been given a role suited to her talents she has shown herself a ballerina of which any company in the world might be proud: I am thinking particularly of her as the Black Queen in *Checkmate*, a role in which she gives a highly individual and dramatic performance which even challenges comparison with that of June Brae (who created the part).

At long last Julia Farron is beginning to get some good opportunities; I hope this trend continues—and I also hope that some of those above her in the company will have the good sense to watch how *she* builds up her roles.

VARIATIONS

To anyone who had followed John Cranko's career with attention it was obvious that his new ballet *Variations on a Theme* would show many influences from Martha Graham; and one might almost have predicted that he would pick up some of Martha Graham's most typical mannerisms—such as her weakness for playing about with lengths of rope and material.

There were also, of course, a number of details from Jerome Robbins' equally obscure ballet *Age of Anxiety* (such as the faceless mask). But I was puzzled by the fact that Cranko reproduced a number of the most characteristic clichés of the expressionist ballets of Ashton (*Dante Sonata* and *The Wanderer*) and Helpmann (*Hamlet*, *Miracle in the Gorbals* and *Adam Zero*): most of these had fallen out of the repertoire by the time Cranko came to England, and yet his variations remained very close to the original themes.

Perhaps the explanation is that he studied photographs of these ballets... Every choreographer must study the works of his predecessors and contemporaries; unfortunately Cranko seems to have a weakness for precisely those aspects of other ballets which are most dated and inexpressive.

MUSICALITY

I used to think that Nemchinova was as unmusical as any dancer could be; but Anya Linden leaves Nemchinova far behind. I saw her dance the girl's solo of the pas de deux in Act I of *Giselle* in three successive performances: each time she lost touch with the music on the very first step, remained right out of time, and ended the dance several beats after or before the music.

In later performances she managed somehow to end with the music, but still contrived to ignore the music completely during the dance. To my mind dancing as unmusical as this is the equivalent of violin-playing by a tone-deaf violinist.

GALA PERFORMANCE

It is normal for ballets to degenerate once they get out of the hands of the choreographer. Under very exceptional circumstances ballets retain their original quality; but it is almost unthinkable that a ballet should improve in the absence of the choreographer.

Nevertheless this is what has happened to Tudor's ballet *Gala Performance*, as presented by the Ballet Rambert. There are several reasons for this. First of all, Tudor was going through a very difficult time when he composed this admirably vicious satire in 1938 for his own company, the London Ballet, and had no opportunity to polish it up and bring out all its nuances before he went to America.

Secondly, Madame Rambert has herself an excellent sense of humour, and is able to foster this in her pupils (whatever their weaknesses in classical roles): each dancer taking over one of the three leading roles in *Gala* had added some detail to it, and in this way the roles have

gradually become enriched.

Finally, Joyce Graeme during her period as ballet mistress of the company rehearsed all the dancers in their parts with admirable judgment: she achieved particularly fine results with Gillian Martlew, whose dead-pan satire of the grand manner (in the role of the ballerina from Milan) is one of the funniest things to be seen on any stage today.

But Audrey Nicholls is also very good in a small part, and in fact the whole corps de ballet dance well. When one sees the Ballet Rambert in *Gala Performance* (or in its other two admirable comedies *Judgment of Paris* and *Peter and the Wolf*), it is hard to believe that it is the same company that appears so dull, provincial and tasteless in *Lac* or *Les Sylphides*.

ULANOVA AND FONTEYN

Recent films from Russia have shown Ulanova to be a bewilderingly erratic dancer.

Bogdanov-Beresovsky's biography made it clear that she can succeed in only a very narrow range of parts: but how could she give such a superb performance in *Chopiniana* (*Les Sylphides*), showing good line, fine musicality, a complete absence of mannerisms and a perfect understanding of the mysterious poetry of Fokine's romantic choreography—and yet dance so badly in *Lac*, in a role which one would think would suit her equally well?

Not only did she show little feeling for the supernatural and mysterious aspects of *Odette*; she flapped her arms in an ugly way, broke the line of her arms at the wrist, poked her head forward, and phrased her enchainements badly.

In no way could this performance compare with that of Fonteyn, who had a dynamic and dramatic range, a sense of line and a musicality without equal today: her ferocious but seductive *Odile* is just as convincing as her tragic and romantic *Odette*, while her ethereal and mysterious (but still lovelorn) *Giselle* of Act II belongs to a different world from that of the enchantingly naive *Giselle* of Act I.

PORTRAIT
BY
JUNE RYAN

TEXT
BY
RICHARD AUSTIN

Michael Somes

THE true danseur noble is a rarity in modern ballet. One is more liable to meet his two common substitutes: either the tubby excessively virile fellow with the appearance of a superannuated operatic tenor, whose large boots seem to plod through every film about the Soviet Ballet; or, worse still, the Western version, all airs and graces fluttering around the stage like an ailing butterfly.

Among the few magnificent exceptions are Igor Youskevitch, Skibine and Michael Somes. Of these Michael Somes has been the last to achieve full recognition. War service, a series of unfortunate accidents, the appalling task of having to compete against the memory of Robert Helpmann in similar roles—all these have delayed his progress.

EASIER TASK

The virtuoso dancer really has a much easier task than that of the *danseur noble*. He can air at speed and spectacle, the achievement of daring and astonishing feats; he is sure of applause, because the public appreciates virtuosity and knows little about style, and he has no need to fear the accusation of effeminacy. But the *danseur noble* has to move beautifully and also with virility, musically and with a high technical accomplishment; he has to be an unobtrusive but never negative partner, a convincing mime, and also

succeed in conveying the pride and dignity appropriate to his rank without appearing either pompous or condescending.

Michael Somes fulfils, to a greater or less degree, each one of these requirements.

He is not a virtuoso. He cannot command the speed, dazzling turns and beats of a Babilée; but his dancing has instead a natural modest elegance, superb finish, and the most subtle musical sensitivity. His first solo in *Daphnis & Cloe* is a remarkable example of this: beautiful in itself, it is also true to the character and to the music, brilliant in execution and elegant in style.

TO FOLLOW

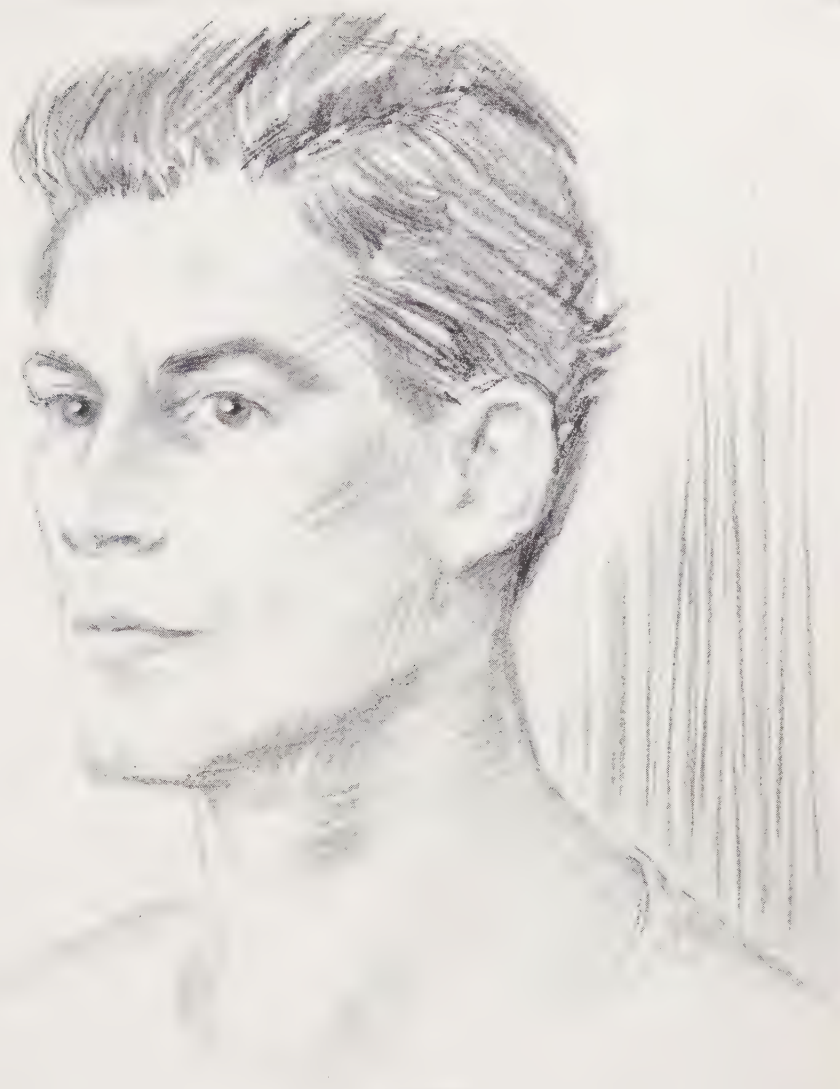
In classical roles Michael Somes had to follow Helpmann which in itself would be enough to undermine the confidence of most dancers. It is greatly to his credit, not that he has made us forget Helpmann in these roles (which would be impossible), but that he has shaped them in his own way—certainly with less subtlety and intense dramatic effect—and has made them into acceptable characters and not mere empty figures.

A curious thing is that even now no one appears more surprised at the excellence of his dancing in the famous *variations* than Somes himself. At the end

of his *variation* his expression is at once puzzled and self-deprecating. It seems that he anticipates the worst from his audience and can hardly believe his good fortune that they have not heaped abuse upon him instead of applause.

To watch Michael Somes dancing is to realise that he has escaped the twin pitfalls of excessive flamboyance or timid reticence. Musical, harmonious and lyrical, his art is a fine proof that the English are capable of producing great male dancers in their own style who are neither effeminate nor ostentatious.

The pity is that Somes is still something of an exception.



“the plea . . . is that modern ballet should not run away from

by RICH

IT is a frequent complaint among critics and ballet-goers that so much new work seen today is sadly lacking in originality. A common pastime for first-nighters is to spot passages in new ballets and track them down to their original source: one discovers, for example, a male solo in *Veneziana* which echoes a similar one in *Les Patineurs*, or an *adagio* for the ballerina and six partners in the same work which reminds one of an *adagio* for the ballerina and five partners in *Scenes de Ballet* which in turn is based on an *adagio* for the ballerina and four partners in *The Sleeping Beauty*. So it goes on and on: examples can be multiplied indefinitely.

The world of modern ballet is a hot-house in which old shoots are replanted in different soil; but this is only symptomatic of a more serious weakness, which is that ballet has become isolated from other branches of the theatre and from life. It is an Ivory Tower, and, alas, not always a very pretty one.

The great and truly original English ballets—*The Rake's Progress* and *Lilac Garden*—have much in common. They deal in direct terms with basic human emotions; they are uncluttered by obscure symbolism; they are told in an original but never mannered vocabulary; they have shape, theatrical power and tragic beauty. They are dramatic. They do not speak in a private esoteric language comprehensible only to the initiate, but are capable of reaching the casual ballet-goer and of being appreciated by him. In their dance is used as a means of emotional expression.

ARID, WEARISOME

How touching also was Ashton's *Nocturne*—the eternal story of love accepted and betrayed, set high above a throbbing city; how arid in comparison are Cranko's wearisome voyages into the subconscious, Balanchine's sterile furhythms, Ashton's anaemic nymphs and dryads. They typify the present retreat into the Ivory Tower, away from life and from the drama. Murky symbols, psychology and mythology have replaced the dance-drama which has such power to express the most subtle shades of emotion and present them in a dramatic form.

The return to the full evening ballet—three or four acts of spectacle, virtuosity and padding—is one example of this retreat. It denies all that Noverre stood for by placing the emphasis on dance mechanics rather than upon movement as a means of emotional expression; it retreats—witness *Blanche-Neige*, *Sylvia* and *Cinderella*—into the world of myth and fairy tale: it fosters the development of “stars” who are seen against a well-

drilled and impersonal background of dancers, instead of a company of expressive artists.

RETROGRADE, MECHANICAL

In America Balanchine's arid experiments are another retrograde step. They have robbed ballet of all emotion; the music is translated with mechanical exactitude into its visual equivalent, while the emotional colouring of the music is ignored. The dancers have nothing to express: to watch a Balanchine ballet is merely to see dancers used as a kind of human musical score. (It is significant that one of his most popular ballets, *Symphonie Concertante*, was composed to demonstrate the relationship between classical dancing and orchestrated movement).

One wonders how much further the dancer can be dehumanized: in the classics of Petipa and in Ashton's return to them the principals at least are able to express themselves, but Balanchine has turned them into notes

on his keyboard. How far distant all this is to his magnificent *Prodigal Son* (1929) in which one of the world's most beautiful stories was told with a depth of compassionate understanding which only emphasises the sterility of what has succeeded it. *The Prodigal Son* and Ninnette de Valois' *Job*

are great ballets because they provide a genuine spiritual experience by their reverent treatment of an eternal theme which is fundamental to the nature of man.

There is no objection to ballet being “escapist” entertainment in the right sense—that is to offer people, many of whom are forced to lead lives of appalling drabness, some outlet for their starved sensibilities and their desire to enjoy beautiful things.

Heaven knows, one does not want choreographers to become over-earnest, to develop an acute attack of social consciousness; one does not want them to go around beating a political big drum or turn *Das Capital* into a ballet. We have had enough of that. The spectacle of a choreographer wrestling with a contemporary problem is a ludicrous one—especially if he tries to solve it by muddle-headed political mumbo-jumbo like Communism.

REMOTE, ABSURD

But there is a wrong type of escapism: a return to Nymphs, Dryads and even the preposterous figure of the great god Pan who should be as dead as mutton by now.

Ballets like *Daphnis and Chloe*, *Orpheus* or *Tiresias*, although they contain much beautiful choreography, are so remote from the emotional problems common to modern audiences that they are unable to provide any sort of Catharsis.

One cannot share in the fate of Tiresias his experiments in sexuality and from one sex to another are emblematic. What relevance at all has this foolish behaviour?

In their effort to avoid this type of thing some choreographers have gone too far. They have created ballets which are a cloak of symbolism, to have a pretence of content.

One can admire the efforts of Jean John Cranko and seriously attempt to find the lying meaning of their ballets; they are in their attempts to express the terrible, weary, frightened world, but I believe the approach to an art whose appeal rests upon the emotions and imagination (minor art) and not upon intellectual

POETRY OF MOVEMENT

The range of movement is at once limited within those limitations capable of expansion.

It cannot present a philosophy or a life, and the choreographers who have tried to express had better write a book; the source in the basic element of emotion deal with the most subtle inter-relationships. Ballet has been condemned for being intellectual: it is indeed not an intellectual art; it is no reason why it should be trivial.

Poetry has not primarily an intellectual content; the man who first coined the phrase “movement” had more sense than the

Ballets like *Harlequin in April*, *Reflexes on a Theme* by Cranko, or *The Art of Facsimile* by Robbins, demand so much to work out their symbolism that they are engaged. They may move one to reflection (which is not a bad thing) but they do not move one in any other way.

It is difficult to be concerned about something for some inexplicable reason, starts with the man who is snapping a vast pair of scissors. Everyone has his own pet theory about it, but the choreographer's intention is to make for interesting conversation and not for frustrating entertainment in the

The plea of this whole article is that ballet should not run away from the simple by ignoring them completely, by retreating into a remote mythological world or by indulging in out of existence. *Giselle* has a greater appeal than *Harlequin in April*.

“Giselle has a greater force and reality than Harlequin in April”

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NOT EVEN SHORT

There is one final type of modern ballet of which we have had quite enough. It is time to leave works like *Caurichios*, *Illuminations* and *The Cage* behind. They do not entertain; they are squalid and decadent; they do no good to their audiences (many of whom have sufficient sense of humour to take them lightly) nor to the prestige of ballet as a whole. They degrade a beautiful art into an orgy for the neurotic, the perverted and those who see life as nasty, brutish and short. (These ballets are not even short, which would be something).

Anthony Tudor in *Dark Elegies* and *Lilac Garden* before the war set a standard for the future, as did de Valois with *The Rake's Progress* and Ashton with *Nocturne*. Unfortunately when Tudor went to the United States he appeared to come under the same influence that has produced writers like Tennessee Williams with their mixture of sentimentality and bogus psychology; so that even his greatest ballet from a point of view of choreographic invention, *Pillar of Fire*, already pointed to the silliness of *Undertow* and the total failure of *La Gloire*.

But those early works are an example by which modern choreographers will be able to extricate ballet from its present impasse by a return to the dance-drama and to the principles of Noverre which are being betrayed. It is time to leave the Ivory Tower for the real world of men and women.

NOVERRE

In a magnificent passage in his *Lettres sur la Danse et sur les Ballets* Noverre states that no one had yet suspected the power of ballet of speaking to the heart. Even with the great technical advances of the present time—which have been a mixed blessing in that they are exploited for their own sake and not as a means towards dramatic expression—ballet still retains that power. But it will not be recaptured by a return to the age of Petipa, which was not a golden age but one of tinsel; it will not be discovered in a dictionary of mythology or a psychological case-book; it will not be communicated by dancers who have been turned into decorated puppets, and whose power of expression has been limited to the task of marking time to symphonic music.

A return to the dance-drama in which composer, choreographer and designer work closely together in order to express a theme which is both moving and comprehensible, must be made. Dancers are interpretative artists, not machines for turning *fouettes*; but so long as they are given roles which demand from them no kind of emotional response, neither they nor the art they serve can demand serious attention.

Pauline Clayden as
"Queen of the Air"
in *Homage*



Photo: Houston Rogers

WHEN I last met Arlene Dahl, she was mixing business (me) with honeymoon (Lex Barker). When last month, Jose Greco met her, she was repeating the formula. She had just married Fernando Lamas. But her reason for meeting Greco was to have his opinion on beauty. And Greco responded in this way.

"So you want to talk about beauty. Ah, it began my career. As a boy, I stamped my feet every time I saw a pretty girl, and now!" He spread his hands eloquently and gave me a flashing smile.

"For me, ugliness does not exist," he said. "True beauty is unique, but attractiveness lies within the command of every woman when she learns how to dress, use her eyes, and express her inner feelings of warmth and affection."

I asked Jose what he noticed first about a woman.

"Hands are particularly interesting, for the way they are used reveals the inner person. Even from a distance, hands can betray nervousness, tenderness, frustration, anger. To shake hands, or hold hands with a woman reveals even more."

"DO YOU think the women of any particular race or nation use their hands particularly well?"

Jose shook his head. "It is universal, something God gives all humans."

We talked about the inner qualities which make a woman appealing, and he remarked: "To me, tenderness is everything. A woman who seems to want to be loved, a passive rather than an aggressive type, is more naturally feminine. Any man wants to feel manly, and he does most strongly when he is the aggressor."

SELMA, ALABAMA has several famous citizens to its local credit. All of one family. The husband is **Eddy Gilmore**, who has toured the world more regularly than Cook's to bring home a story a day for *Associated Press*. The wife is Soviet ballerina **Tamara Tchernashova**. And the story of her last-minute escape from Siberia (the crime: marrying an American) is contained in *Gilmore's My Russian Wife* just published in the U.S. by Doubleday.

APRIL OLRICH is leaving the Sadlers Wells Company, after their guest performance in the

open-air theatre in Granada, Spain. Her gay infectious personality will be missed, as will cameo of Little Red Riding Hood in *The Sleeping Beauty*.

ALEXANDER GRANT danced the role of the Miller, in the performance of *Le Tricorne*, in Amsterdam: the Millers Wife was danced by **Anne Heaton**, who has recently returned to the company after her leg injury, and is now dancing in such fine form again.

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE which has not been in the company's repertoire for some years, is to be revived for the Edinburgh Festival, and will, we hope, be seen in London on their short September visit; this work, unknown to many, was first produced in London at the old Alhambra Theatre in 1919, when **Leonide Massine** devised the choreography.

ALICIA MARKOVA was forced to cancel her appearances in the United States due to sinus infection. With **Milorad Miskovitch** she will now visit the U.S. before arriving for a tour in Japan.

VIOLETTE VERDY, seen last year with **Roland Petit**, will join Festival Ballet for their tour of the U.S.A. . . . **Boris Kniazeff** will close his Lausanne school this month and open a new school

Margot Fonteyn, Nadia Nerina and Michael Somes arriving in Holland.



in Geneva on September 1st . . . The Phoenix Ballet is experimenting with some unusual scores such as a **Stan Kenton** concerto and the pop tune "Ebb Tide" . . . They have also mounted a version of **Chaplin's "Limelight"** Ballet . . .

NINETTE de VAOLIS has more or less confirmed the gossip, that the Paris Opera Ballet Company, will come to Covent Garden in October: when the home company will pay a return visit to Paris, after which they will probably go on a long European tour.

MARGOT FONTEYN'S speech on the last night, must be one of the shortest on record, and probably got the most applause "I shall not say anything—until I retire".

VIOLETTA ELVIN, **John Field**, **Angela Walton** and **Peter Clegg** are back in town again after their successful, though short Welsh tour.

A BALLET composed by one of the finest traditional Jazz artists is to be televised later this year over B.B.C.-T.V. By **Sidney Bechet**, the New Orleans saxist, *La Nuit Est Une Sorciere* will be premiered on television. After writing it **Bechet** said "I have written my ballet, now I can die in peace." Now he is a seriously ill man.

Aisle

A COMMENTARY ON

QUOTES from comments made this month: **Jeanmaire**: I only read the reviews which say I am good. **Leslie Caron**: **Roland Petit** and I are just good friends. **Leslie Caron**, 11 (more seriously): Almost any American has a good sense of rhythm. **Danny Daniels** (with **Agnes de Mille**): I wonder how many dancers know the difference between an upbeat and a downbeat.

VALERIE ADAMS has now left the Sadlers Wells Company: whilst **Veronica Vail** has decided to remain in South Africa, after the termination of the Theatre Ballet's tour, to get married.

IN **Robert Helpman's** production of a *Midsummer Nights Dream*, a large contingent of ex-Sadler's Wells dancers will be found including **Kenneth Melville**, **Henry Naughton**, **Valerie Adams**, **Jane Shore** and **Joanne Nesbitt**, who is at the moment in South Africa.

WE WOULD like to apologise for a slip in captioning last month. The photograph on page twenty-one was of **John Hart**, of course. Not of **John Field** as incorrectly stated.

WE WOULD like to wish every success to **Meriel Evans**, who has recently married **Luke Asquith**.

ALICIA MARKOVA was seen at Covent Garden, on the last night of the ballet season, amidst a packed audience, consisting mainly of familiar faces, including **Beryl Grey** and her husband.

THE August issue of *Heiress* magazine is of especial interest to dancers and dancegoers. Ballet interest is high in this issue (*Heiress* caters well for the ballet enthusiast) and the issue features a £200 contest which a great many readers will want to enter.

seat

THE BALLET MONTH

FROM PARIS

THE choir and Ballets *Basque Etorki*, under the directorship of their founder **Phillippe Oyham-buru**, made their debut in Paris at the Theatre des Champs Elysees where they have been during the entire month of June, owing to their great success. Without a doubt *Etorki* has formed the most authentic French folklore group and the most artistic. The costumes and decors are very beautiful and the choir is simply marvellous.

AT the Theatre de l'Etoile the new "Ballets de l'Etoile Company" made their debut under founder **Jean Laurent**, and the young dancer and choreographer **Maurice Bejart**. Others taking part in the group were **Solande Schwarz**, formerly from the Opera, the young

Australian dancer **Joan Cazdow** (very expressive) and the Swedish dancers **Ellen Rasch** and **Lucienne Berggreen**.

The male dancers include **Bejart**, **Michel Rayne** and **Alain Davesne**. All the remaining corps de ballet danced well. At this performance the maitre-de-ballet **Yves Brioux** reconstructed the Grand Pas des Deesses from the Jugement de Paris by **Jules Perrot**, music by **Pugni**, and costumes from **Chalon**.

Dancers taking part, were **Ellen Rasch**, **Solande Schwarz**, **Lucianne Berggreen** and **Maurice Bejart**. In the third act of *Coppelia*, **Solande Schwarz** danced the pas de deux with **Maurice Bejart**. They are indeed the brilliant stars that we have known from the Opera. In the ballet *Redemption*, to music by **Liszt**, **Maurice Bejart** shows his talent as choreographer, and **Joan Cazdow** makes an enchanting partner. *L'Inconnu* with **Eilen Rasch** and **Michel Rayne** very much resembles **Roland Petit's Rendezvous**. Finally, Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* to music by **Scarlatti** was an excellent production which was danced by the entire Company.

AT the Musee d'Art on June 18th, a recital was given by **Radha**, the star of the film *Le Fleuve* by **Jean Renoir**.

This is a children's performance! In Venice (writes Robert Paterson) Signora Alessandri has mounted the second annual performance of the Academy of Classical Dancing. Photographed here is Jeu des Cartes; and Alessandra Vianello is singled out by our correspondent for especial mention.



Violetta Elvin greeted by miners during her Welsh tour last month

A series of remarkable oriental dances were performed under the organisation of the Association Francaise de Amis de l'Orient. Born in Madras, **Radha** was a pupil of **Rukmini Devi**, and his dancing belongs to the **Barathal Nathyman** style.

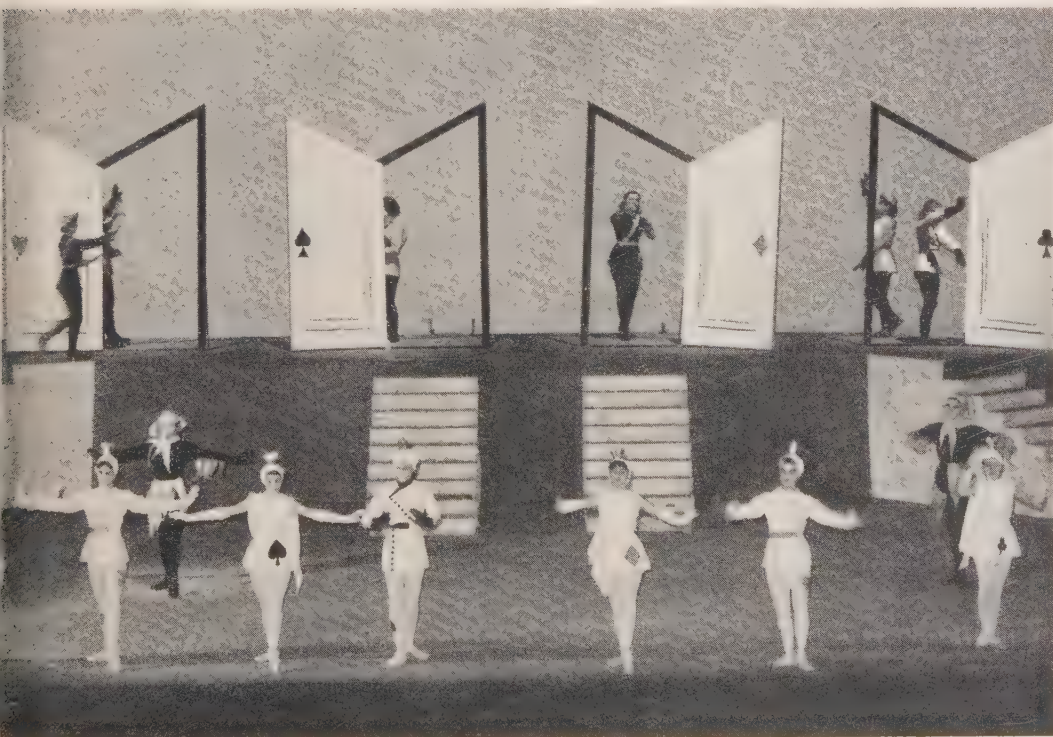
At the end of this recital which was a great success, **Radha** stated that he had decided to give up the Cinema and devote himself to dancing.

ON June 10th at the Theatre Marigny, the young promising dancers from the Opera, **Michel Descombey** and **Manuel Parres**, presented their choreographies with a group of their Opera colleagues. The following ballets were given—*Freres Humains* — (**Descombey - Gerschwin**) *Firvres*, (**Descombey-Noel See**) and *El Toro*, and *L'Halterophyle*, by **Michela Prres**. The choreography was good, but on the whole the ballets were lacking in originality.

THE Summer Season at the Casino d'Enghien-les-Bains was inaugurated on the 24th and 26th of June by two evening performances with **Yvette Chauvire**, **Jean Babilée**, **Peter Van Dijk**, **Igor Fosca**, **Janine Monnin** and **Gayle Spear**.

At this performance one must remember the two magnificent displays by **Jean Babilée**, first of all in a "Variation" by **Leonide Massine** *Mario et le Mage* from a fairy tale by **Thomas Mann**, to music by **V. Mannino**. This is going to be presented at the Scala, Milan this season. The other, *Pas Classique*, to music by **J. Michel Damase**, and choreography by **Babilée** himself. This was indeed splendid, together with **Janine Monnin**. **Yvette Chauvire** and **Peter Van Dijk** danced *Rondo Capriccioso* by **Saint Saens**, to choreography by **Serge Lifar** who also presented a ballet from **J. S. Bach** (*Suite No. 3*). Other compositions by **Igor Fosca** and **Peter Van Dijk** completed the programme.

F. REYNA





OWING to lack of space, quite a number of records for review have lagged behind but I hope now to give you some idea of them. Firstly, Decca LXT2927, *Jeux and Six Epigraphes Antiques* (Debussy), the former used by both Nijinsky and Borlin—neither too successfully but the music needs no scenario and Ansermet delicately draws out the emotional and nervous tension that the composer so subtly portrays.

We rarely hear the *Epigraphes*—their touch here delighted me, making this a disc I most readily add to my collection. Passing on to something much more tangible, yet more fantastic, is *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Columbia 33CX-1150-9, which balletically takes one back to Shepperton Studios, Tcherina and Moira Shearer. What an entrancing Olympia she made but the cameras did not capture Tcherina's enchantment that held everyone so spellbound on the set.

Nor do these records completely capture the enchantment of Offenbach's opera but on the whole they are good and there is plenty of enjoyment to be had from them—a better Antonia would have made all the difference.

With Sadler's Wells putting on *The Firebird* for the Edinburgh Festival, the suite conducted by Ansermet, Decca LXT-2916, is well timed.

I find it superior to the recording under the composer's baton—not often does he bring out the best in his own works. Fonteyn should be superlative in the name-part, while that of the Princess seems made for Beriosova. Menuhin's performance with Furtwangler conducting *Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in 8 minor*, HMV ALP1135 (*Les Elfes*—Foline), is not great but it is sound and enjoyable, whereas Stern's recent interpretation, technically good, lacked feeling. This complaint cannot be levelled at Telefunken's recording, LGX66024, of Franck's *Symphonic Poem Psyche*, which will recall for those lucky enough to have seen it, Babiée's first and very effective ballet, *L'Amour et Son Amour*.

One is very well contented with Andre's performance until one hears Beinum's on Decca LW5069 which I reviewed last February. There is no question of choices—Beinum obviously loves the work and appreciates

the composer's beautiful shading. The forces of good and evil are always cropping up and the idea certainly does produce good and bad ballets. Ashton's *Dante Sonata I* still enjoy though I ought to consider it, so I am told, as dated.

The same may perhaps be said of Lifar's excellent ballet, *Passions*, to music from Cesar Franck's Symphony. The Vienna Philharmonic under Furtwangler, has been very well recorded indeed, Decca LXT2905, and although some of the passages tend to become a little dull, the performance as a whole, is very satisfying.

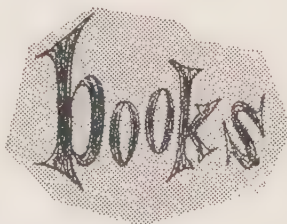
I am disappointed at the E.M.I. Group bringing out a third 10-inch record of *La Boutique Fantasque*, H.M.V. DLP1032. Not that Robert Irving and the Philharmonia fail to give a satisfactory account of this most endearing ballet but I did hope they would put a competitor forward to vie with Decca's excellent 12-inch full recording on LXT2555.

Etudes Symphoniques (Schumann) used by Kniaeff for his ballet of the same name, on Decca LXT2869, are played by Julius Katchen though not quite at his best, while *Francaix's Serenade for Twelve Instruments and Piano Concertino*, Telefunken LGM65021, I found dull.

The music itself is poor and I wondered at Balanchine choosing it for his ballets, *A La Francaix* and *Concertino*. Nor can I raise much enthusiasm for the Tchaikowski and Offenbach Fantasies, Decca LK4077—they are well played and contain plenty of music used for ballet; perhaps it is the fitting together of the jigsaw puzzle that does not quite come off.

But *Casse Noisette* on Decca Medium Play LW5110, cheers me up with some fine playing by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Fistoulari. It is the usual eight numbers transferred from the 12-inch LXT2611 and, on price alone, is obviously the better buy. Finally attractive renderings by Andre and the Belgian Radio Orchestra of *The Dance of the Hours* from *La Gioconda* and the overture to the *Silken Ladder* (*Con Amore* by Christensen) on Telefunken TM68020.

B. C.



MANUEL DE FALLA. By Jaime Pahissa. (Museum Press, 15s).

Perhaps no composer owes more to his association with ballet than Manuel de Falla. His output was small and, outside musical circles where he was the friend of Debussy, Ravel and Dukas, it was his ballet music that brought him his widest recognition. The set of pieces, *Love the Magician*, which he had written in the first place for a famous Andalusian dancer, was later used by Bohm; his music for *The Three-Cornered Hat* made him internationally famous.

It was during the enforced sojourn of the Diaghilev Ballet in Spain during the 1914 war that Diaghilev commissioned the music from Falla. Diaghilev had, at first, contemplated a ballet set to the composer's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, but eventually used a theme that Falla had already in mind.

The part for solo voices accompanied by castanets, hand-clapping and cries of "Ole" at the beginning of the ballet was composed in London just before the first performance, so that a drop curtain could be displayed. This depicted a group of Spaniards watching a bull fight from a box, and was painted almost entirely by Picasso himself. There is a strange discrepancy in the account of this first performance. On page 104 we read that because of the illness of his mother, Falla returned to Spain a few hours before the curtain rose. On page 170 we learn that Diaghilev locked the shy composer in his box to ensure his presence on this occasion.

There is an interesting detailed analysis of the work, giving musical examples and the sources of the folk material used for the score.

Later Diaghilev asked Falla to collaborate in a ballet, *Pulchinelina*, but as the composer was busy at the time the work was given to Stravinski, and there Falla's connection with ballet ended.

This book, by a close friend of Falla and who is also well-known in Spain as a composer and conductor, deals most comprehensively with the life and work of the musician.

A Catalogue of 120 Dance Films. Compiled by Peter Brinson. (The Dancing Times, 2s. 6d).

After glancing through this catalogue one feels impelled to buy or borrow a projector and enjoy in one's own home such delights as Fonteyn in *Les Sylphides*, Doukoudovsky in *Graduation Ball*, and Gopal in *Lord Siva Danced*.

Prices vary from *Corroboree* at 2s. 6d. to the full film of *The Red Shoes* for £12. Some cost

nothing, and most are surprisingly reasonable.

The list contains all the films that can be obtained (non-theatrically) without difficulty in Britain, and includes ballet, national dancing and certain musicals.

Clubs, students and lovers of the dance generally must be indebted to Peter Brinson for this careful and extensive record.

Labanotation. By Ann Hutchinson. (James Laughlin, New York, \$3.50)

Two hundred years ago, a writer on the manner and morals of the French Court complained that more choreographies than bibles could be found on the ladies' night tables.

These must have been written in the famous notation evolved by Beauchamp, Louis XIV's dancing master and founder of the "five positions," and it may be surmised that a knowledge of dance notation was as essential as that of music to a cultured person.

There have been various attempts to describe dance movement on paper but with varying success. Ultimately they fail because the continual expansion of the dance vocabulary make each system in turn outmoded. Even the costly method of the cine-camera can only reveal the choreographer's intentions at second-hand—through the dancer's interpretation—and there is a general confusion of blurred impressions that even constant re-showing cannot eliminate.

Labanotation claims that for the first time the pure concept of the choreographer is successfully reconstructed. The system was initiated by Rudolf Laban, expert on movement in its relationship to the human body, and fostered by the Dance Notation Bureau of America under Ann Hutchinson. It has been used to set down the work of Balanchine, Robbins, and Graham, among others. Ninette de Valois hopes in the future to include it in the syllabus of the Sadler's Wells School, and in the meantime she has arranged with the Bureau for Margaret Dale and Pauline Clayden to learn the method by correspondence—a course which they are finding absorbing. The book is illustrated by more than five hundred symbols and drawings, and must interest all students of the theory and practice of the dance.

P. C.

IT is not a normal magazine policy to name rival publications. **BALLET TODAY** has several times broken this frightened, smallminded taboo. If we want to say that a rival magazine has published foolish or misguided statements, we name the magazine.

This month the magazine in point is the ballroom and ballet monthly, the *Dancing Times*. This publication has decided to lift its voice against the successful, mammoth newspapers of Fleet Street.

Nothing wrong there. Fleet Street can be as silly as any other tightly-packed business area. But *Dancing Times* attacks the Fleet Street policy of expecting full-hearted co-operation from entertainers and artists.

AUCKLAND

FROM PAGE 8

Kirner had an opportunity to display her flair for character dancing as the chaperone, and **Bernard Jamieson** and **Kenneth Croser's** wrestling bout was well timed and executed.

In the final analysis the work was little more than a good-natured romp for the whole company.

It is impossible to perform good ballet if the music is unsatisfactory, and despite the firm control kept over the orchestra by **Warwick Braithwaite**, the guest conductor, a much better performance would have resulted from more rehearsals.

LOCAL

THE SECOND programme was built around **Jackson** and **Ashbridge** who appeared with a local corps de ballet in *Les Sylphides* as well as the pas de deux from *Sleeping Beauty* and *Don Quixote* and the premier of another locally devised ballet *Once upon a time*.

Once upon a time was premiered on June 10th with choreography by **Daphne Kirner** and decor by **John Holmwood**.

The ballet is light and colourful, with attractive costumes by **Molly Cook**. The treatment is three-fold, romantic, realistic and abstract.

As the sprite, **Daphne Kirner** displayed neat dancing, although a little judicious cutting would have improved the ballet and strengthened the sprite's solo. The storm-tossing scene jarred somehow, the costumes of the male dancers being almost indistinguishable from the scenery, making it impossible to see their dancing at all. As the bridal couple **Bobbie Henry** and **Carl Baker** were confident and sure, and the choreography did not call for more than their technique would stand. **Margaret Gummer** and **Kenneth Croser** danced the young couple with enthusiasm.

Biting The Hand That Leads You

ELUSIVE

Margot Fonteyn, according to *Dancing Times*, was very correct in refusing an interview to a national newspaper. The newspaper critic described her as "elusive." *Dancing Times* judges this a snot enhancing Fleet Street's reputation. Sarcastically, the editorial goes on to wonder if the critic would have asked her breakfast menu or whether she likes cats.

And that would have shown how bad the newspaper's interviewing habits are.

Fiddlesticks.

PUBLIC

Margot Fonteyn is kept by the public which avidly reads the national papers. She has attained her success on the love, interest and loyalty—not of the few thousand readers of *Dancing*

Times, but on the millions of average balletgoers who read their daily and evening newspapers.

She was more than elusive. She was ungrateful. These newspapers have, without any charge or return, publicized, boosted and sold ballet to the millions. Without them ballet would still be simpering over tea in suburban soirees.

It is only beginning to be accepted by dancers that they live on publicity, and upon the audience reached by publicity. The cloistered existence is being shattered, the subsidies are on their last legs.

STATURE

A ballerina of Margot Fonteyn's stature can meet any member of the press and receive professional treatment and interested help from him. And she

Carzou's Design for Act Two, Giselle at Paris Opera

owes it to the press to extend such co-operation herself.

Alicia Markova is a case in point. She "gets on" wonderfully with the press. She accepts a newspaper representative as a helpmate, not as a misquoting moron.

Ballet's attitude that unless one can speak its technical language one cannot be intelligent is rubbish. Of course the normal pressman cannot talk in professional terms. Why should he? He is a highly-paid expert in his own field. Can the dancer talk journalese? Of course not.

NORMAL

A dancer told me recently, "Of course its different with you, I can speak normally, you know your ballet. But with a reporter . . ." What nonsense this is.

The more rapidly that dancers and such magazines as *Dancing Times*, accept the wide world in place of the hothouse: the better.

Ballet is no longer an avand-garde cult. It is an art form and available entertainment for a growing segment of the public.



IN RUSSIA

NOW

FROM PAGE
NINE

One of the most difficult roles in *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is that of the Khan Girei. But young Vladimir Zakharov, who worked on the role under ballet master Pyotr Gusev, handles it with finesse. His Girei is expressive and dramatic. He does not make him exotic and stilted, but paints him romantically moved and exalted. Further work on the role will enable Zakharov to discover still more subtle psychological colours and nuances.

The performance of E. Kashani in the small but vividly memorable role of Nurali, the leader of the Khan's army, deserves the greatest praise. In the war dance, a dance filled with highly difficult movements a violent nomad warrior is portrayed in a sharply defined, finished pattern.

Also deserving of praise is the smooth, co-ordinated work of the Bolshoi Theatre corps de ballet. The Polish character dances in the first act, the many interesting classical dances in the harem (Act II) and, finally, the warlike Tatar dances in the last act are performed with real brilliance. In those dances M. Borisov, A. Kramarevsky and S. Yagudin



Epilogue scene of Prokofiev's "Male of the Stone Flower"

stand out. Their warlike dance is so fiery and temperamental that it ensures them an ovation every time.

TWENTY-FOUR-YEARS-OLD

For this production the Bolshoi Theatre orchestra is also conducted by a young man, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. He is only 24-years-old and still a student at the Moscow Conservatoire. But his exceptional gifts and his appearances with large symphony orchestras at International Festivals and in Moscow concert halls persuaded the Bolshoi Theatre management to invite him to conduct at the theatre as assistant to the well-known conductor Yuri Fayer. Today, for the first time in Bolshoi Theatre history,

a Conservatoire student stands behind the stand in the Soviet Union's finest opera and ballet theatre.

Gennadi Rozhdestvensky conducts *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* with taste and a fine understanding of the music.

The latest Bolshoi Theatre production of *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is enjoying great success. And now, in the month of July, when Moscow's theatres are holding their traditional reviews of young talent, audiences are especially happy to acclaim the young performers at one of the country's oldest theatres, men and women who have successfully assimilated the best traditions of the Russian classical ballet school.

M. Dudinskaya, as Odette; M. Sergeyev as Prince Siegfried, and M. Mikhailov as the wizard Rotbar in Tchaikowsky's ballet Swan Lake.



GERMANY

THE programme of the Bayerische Staatsoper during the Munich Festival (August 12th to September 9th) will include four ballet evenings.

They will open with *La Tragedy de Salome*, music by Florent Schmitt, choreography by Mlakar. In the principal parts are Heino Hallhuber (Johannes), Franz Baur (Herodes), Natascha Trofimova (Salome), Traudl Stubner (Herodias). Followed by Werner Egk's *The Chinese Nightingale*, choreography by Tatjana Gsovsky with the soloists Nika Sanftleben (Nightingale), N. Trofimova (artificial Nightingale), Hilde Stadler (Girl), H. Hallhuber (Death) and ending with *Princess Turandot* by Gottfried von Einem, again choreography by the Mlakar, danced by Irene Skorik (Turandot), Franz Baur (Samarkant), H. Hallhuber (Kaf-laf) and Will Spindler (Fool).

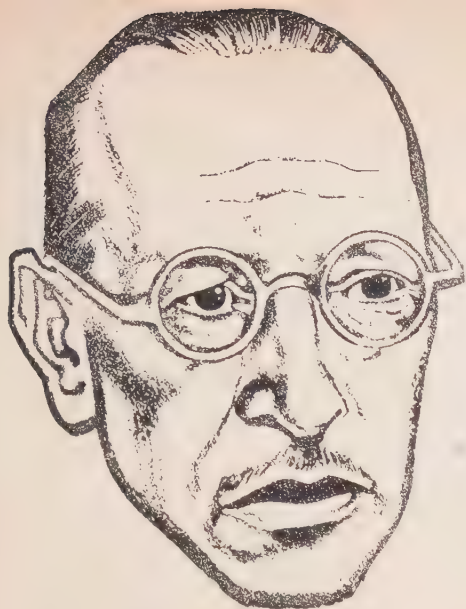
The second evening has the production of Glucks *L'Orfano della China* by the choreographer Mlakar and *Verklungene Feste* to music by Couperin/Richard Strauss.

The decors are by Helmut Jurgens and Herbert Kern, the musical direction by Hans Gierster. The programmes will be completed by Mozart's *Les Petit Riens* and Prokofiev's *Cinderella*, latter in the choreography by Victor Gsovsky. The dancers are I. Skorik (Cinderella), W. Matthes and W. Spindler (Stepsisters) Elfi Weber (Step-mother), H. Hallhuber (Prince).

BAYREUTH

The same Munich company gave in Bayreuth a ballet gala performance in the only barock-theatre of Germany not destroyed. In this enchanting theatre Pia and Pino Mlakar staged their last ballet before leaving the troupe. They will be followed by the English ballet master Alan Carter next season. Besides Handel's *Concerto Grosso* and Mozart's *Les Petit Riens*, the highlight was *L'Orfano della China* or *The Prince of China*.

This old ballet by G. Angiolini was very much appreciated by the press and the 19-year-old Ursula Droehmer took over the chief part (Idamea) originally created for N. Trofimova.



the flair that is

Igor Stravinski

ON RECORD

IGOR STRAWINSKI is quite well represented on discs and in view of the Wells' production for the Edinburgh Festival, the most interesting is *The Firebird*. *Ansermet*, on Decca LXT2916 backed by *The Symphony of Psalms*, gives a better rendering than the composer on Columbia 33C1010. Both works can be obtained separately on Decca LX3045 and LX3047. Stravinsky and the New York S.O. give a short suite from *Petrouchka*, Columbia 33C1015, coupling it with the only recording of *Scenes de Ballet*, but again we must consider *Ansermet*, spreading over two sides of Decca LXT2502—it is splendid. For his third great balletic work, we turn to Markevitch conducting *Le Sacre Du Printemps*, H.M.V. CLP1003, a thrilling performance—other recordings being Decca LXT2563 and Columbia 33CX 1083. Whether inspired or not, his treatment of the Tchaikovsky melodies are enjoyable in *Le Baiser de la Fee*, unfortunately not too well recorded on Decca LXT2631. *Les Noces* Columbia DB1790, *Appollon Musagetes* Decca AX167-70, and *Chant du Rossignol* H.M.V. DB 9339-41, complete the ballet recordings.

Other works are, *Circus Polka* Decca LX3072, also included on Columbia 33 CX1100 with *Fireworks*, *Ode*—a short but moving piece, *Ebony Concerto*—solo clarinetist Woody Herman but not to Benny Goodman's standard, and *Russian Maiden's Song*. *Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments* H.M.V. CLP 1160, *Two Suites for Small Orchestra* Brunswick AXL2005, *Duo Concertant* Brunswick AXT 1047, *Pastorale for Violin and Wind Quartet* and *Russian Maiden's Song* Columbia LX1174—the latter also H.M.V. DA5268, *Concerto in D for Strings* H.M.V. C3733-4 and finally *Etude in F Sharp Minor* H.M.V. C2998.

CAN a man of over seventy continue to be labelled a "modern"? Surely the question arose repeatedly whenever the birthday of Igor Stravinsky was noted?

How many years since the debut of the forlorn *Petrouchka* and the unhappy band, of the dazzling *Firebird*, of the chaotic, great *Rite of Spring*? These were written for Serge Diaghilev whose criteria, if not his mark, has long been swept away along with the Alhambra wardrobe and the accommodating dowagers who were his credit.

So much has happened since the first decades of this century. So much music has been produced. So much forgotten. Yet Stravinsky, 40 then, is still a contemporary . . . still a detonator of rife and reaction 30 or more years later.

What did he do?

OUT TO GO WIDER

Nothing, in fact, so extraordinary. Yet something so simple, so manifest that none of the romantics who sluggishly waded around him could see his trend.

He ignored the patented, pious horizons of music. Trained but not moulded, under the influence of Rimski-Korsakov, Stravinsky set out—not to do better, but to go wider. His effect was so much the greater. To "do better" is to improve upon an accepted past. To "go wider" is to unshackle the eye from other men's charts.

To concrete his belief in himself and to sledgehammer an uninterested world into his music, Stravinsky rushed his talents. His music was ruthless, bold, and aberration that shocked and silenced. Only adequate score-study could have made his audience see the basic worth of his music. Superficially it aroused easy dismissal: "that's not music".

The full report should have read: that's not the music of other men, dead men. It was, however, the music of Stravinsky.

His frank approach to instrumental scoring led him to believe that any note an instrumentalist could reach was a desirable one. The false limitation of the accepted scale was thrown overboard. So, for a time, was general acclaim.

But it came.

- The revival of *The Firebird* by Sadler's Wells prompts this tribute to the consistent modern who sledgehammered his way into music . . . and then made music come his way.

It came just as Stravinsky, the sledgehammer having served its introductory purpose, became able to concentrate on the use of his widened-range rather than upon its mere existence.

Most anarchy has within it the genesis of a future betterment. So with his.

Eventually the cacophony was cleared, the bias lifted. It was even admitted that Stravinsky could write a memorable melodic line. *The Firebird* theme should have proven that from the first.

MISSING—"INTENTION"

What was missed in the original and succeeding arguments on Stravinsky was his intention. Musicians conversed on the difficulties of the scoring, conductors complained of the heterogeneous rhythm, the public—as ever—called it noise as though they had delivered an epitaph.

Since those early days, Stravinsky has gone through many phases. Even to the extent of rearranging his own previous work to fit his new aesthetic pattern. Many labels have been glued upon these various travels.

Yet the flair of Stravinsky is not a diverse thing. The product is. But the essential basis is the intention behind all his work. That intention: to expand. He has tested the expansion of his ideas, and their contraction. He has swelled his work for large and exotically-instrumented orchestras. And he has locked it into a cell of miniature scoring. No composer has so frequently shunned his last success to try, try another and opposed sphere.

Stravinsky has ranged so broadly that even an enthusiast can be surprised by some outpouring he has not known. There is no rut, no recognisable trademark.

Unless you can recognise the flair of genius.

And for many years Stravinsky has had the satisfaction of knowing the world can do just that. They have discovered his genius as they once shunned the first signs of it.

It isn't that the anarchist has settled down. It is, rather, that the world has grown up.



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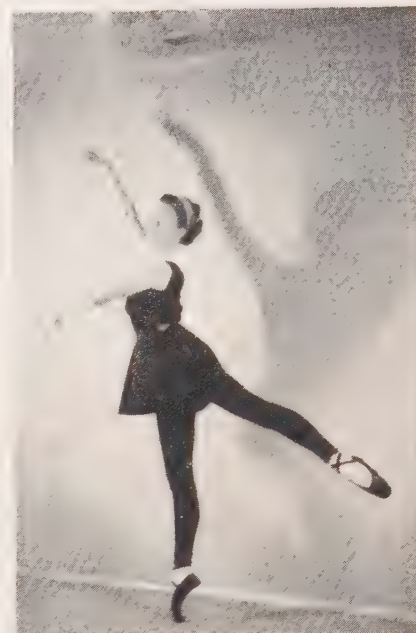
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— PART FIVE —

IN BALLET

Today

Nora Kaye. Of Russian parentage, but born in the United States, Nora Kaye first worked at the New York Metropolitan and in various Broadway and road shows until joining Lucia Chase in Ballet Theatre just before the war.

In 1942 she danced Hagar in *Pillar of Fire* which Antony Tudor created for her. This ballet immediately brought attention to Nora Kaye and has been associated with her as no other work has been. It is to be revived if and when she returns to the company.

Apart from the Tudor ballet she has danced the Wilis queen in *Giselle*, *Aurora*, *Odette/Odile*, and in *Lilac Garden*, *Facsimile*, etc.

She joined George Balanchine's New York City Ballet for a short period.

Gene Kelly. Pittsburgh-born dancer Gene Kelly who appeared in smaller musicals and various shows locally and on tour before appearing in *Anchors Aweigh*, *American in Paris*, *Singing in the Rain*, *On The Town*, etc. He has become the figurehead of the Hollywood "Ballet plus . . ." cinedance and is still working on a finished print of his self-directed, non-dialogue *Invitation to the Dance* for MGM. He has also made several non-dancing films such as *Devil Makes Three* and the coming *Seagulls over Sorrento*, again for MGM, his home studio.

Michael Kidd. Choreographer for Ballet Theatre, Broadway musicals and motion pictures. He is best known, perhaps, for his dancing in such ballets as Eugene Loring's *Billy the Kid* and in *Fancy Free*, *Pillar of Fire*. Among his own ballets is *On Stage* created in 1945 and he choreo-



Nathalie Krassovska

graphed *Finian's Rainbow* which was a hit Broadway musical in 1947 although a failure when presented in London.

Nathalie Krassovska (Natalie Krassovska, Nathalie Leslie, etc.). Russian-born dancer who first worked in the United States with Romola Nijinska, George Balanchine, etc. Has worked with Ballet Russe, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, etc. and is currently a ballerina of Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet.

John Kriza. American dancer who has worked both in modern dance and in ballet. He became

established as premier danseur with Ballet Theatre although he has made excursions from this group.

He has created roles and appeared in a wide variety of ballets including *Facsimile*, *Fancy Free*, *Interplay*, *Billy the Kid*, etc.

L

Hugh Laing. English dancer who studied under Madame Rambert and first danced for the Ballet Club, Tudor's London Ballet and such groups before joining Ballet Theatre. He has also appeared in a succession of musical shows.

Hugh Lang. American dancer of the Gene Kelly school who has worked in musicals, various ballet companies including Ballet Theatre, etc. and become associated with the musical *Pal Joey*. He recently recreated his part, Joey, in London during the Princess until his return during June to the United States. He is preparing to go into a winter-opening musical in New York.

Pearl Lang. American dancer who studied under and works as a principal soloist in the Martha Graham dance company. She was seen recently during Martha Graham's season at London's Saville-theatre.

Gerd Larsen. English dancer (Danish descent) married to Harold Turner of Sadler's Wells, the company in which she works. Has been in the various companies which led up to the Wells, including Rambert, London, etc. and with Mona Inglesby for a

time in the International Ballet.

Tanaquil Le Clercq. French dancer who has been consistently associated with American ballet. A ballerina of Balanchine's New York City Ballet, Le Clercq is one of the finest dancers in contemporary American ballet.

Sigurd Leeder. Today mainly known for his famous school in London, Leeder was in the modernist trilogy completed by Kurt Jooss and Rudolf von Laban (of *Labanotation* fame). Leeder was a keystone of the Jooss organisation until his opening of the Leeder school in London.

Olga Lepeshinskaya. Russian dancer (Moscow school) in the Ulalanova class although little (of course) is known of her work here.

David Lichine. Russian dancer trained in Paris and had danced with almost every major company before settling on the West-coast of the United States—Pavlowa, Ballet Russe (various), Ballet Theatre, and the Ballets des Champs-Elysees. He formed the "Ballet de la Ville Los Angeles" in Los Angeles, California this year and was forced to disband it during the first season in Paris. Married to Tatiana Riabouchinska who dances with him and was the ballerina of the Los Angeles company.

Serge Lifar. Russian dancer who was brought to Paris by Serge Diaghilev in 1923 and, with an interval from 1944 until 1947, he has been at the Paris Opera during the whole of his career. He is principal choreographer and artistic director of the Opera Ballet which will be seen in London later this year during Sadler's Wells appearance at the Opera.

Jose Limon. American dancer, modern ballet. Associated with Doris Humphrey and other teachers and one of the pioneers of modern dance in the United States.

Pilar Lopez. Spanish dancer and sister of Argentinita. After Argentinita's death, Pilar Lopez formed her own company with Manola Vargas. She has continually, and highly successfully, toured the world since then.

Eugene Loring. American dancer who has worked as both a ballet and musical choreographer and is now best known as a television "spectacular" choreographer and film dance director.

diary

Festival Ballet at Festival Hall

- July 26-31: *Casse, Symphony for Fun, Pas de Quatre*
 Aug. 2-7: *Lac, Alice, Beau Danube*
 9-14: *Esmeralda*
 16-18: *Sylphides, Scheherazade, Spectre, Igor*
 19-21: *Sylphides, Petrouchka, Spectre, Igor*
 23-28: *Concerto, Vision of Marguerite, Vilia, Don Quixote*
 Aug. 30-
 Sept 1: *Giselle, Napoli*
 2-4: *Napoli, Casse*
 6-11: *Esmeralda*

Ballet Rambert

- July 26: *Festival, Barnstable*
 Aug. 16: (three weeks): *Rep., B'ham*
 Sept. 6: *Civic, Chesterfield*
 13: *Marlowe, Canterbury*

Edinburgh Arts Festival

- Aug. 23-28: *Sadler's Wells Ballet in Tricorne, Firebird, Boutique, Fantasia, at the Empire*

Aug. 31-

- Sept 11: *Moirae Shearer, Robert Helpmann, ballet in Midsummer Night's Dream at Empire. (Prior to U.S. tour)*

Les Ballets et Choeurs Basques Etorki

- At Sadler's Wells Theatre*
 August 9: *Short Season*

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The double vision

(*Tritsch-Tratsch*) it is true only deserves a passing mention—a piquant little ballet to the music of Strauss.

But already in *Sea Change* an original mind with a sure sense of theatre and a discriminating musical taste begin to emerge. The ballet only fails to be a complete success because the drama has to compete with the powerful music of Sibelius—a truly formidable task.

His development on these escapist lines reaches its full development in *Beauty and the Beast*. In this ballet perfection is reached, so well are mood, movement, and music matched. Being little more than a prolonged *pas de deux* it has been shorn of all unnecessary detail. Each movement, both by Beauty and by The Beast, adds something to the story. A moment of climax, when the way is barred as Beauty tries to escape from the glade and The Beast is not readily forgotten, nor is that moment of supreme pathos when her pity is aroused with such depth and sincerity that she feels true love for this ugly creature: a sincerity which is rewarded by the transformation of the Beast into a prince of dreams.

The legend is a simple story, and Cranko has managed to preserve all of its innocent simplicity. Choreography, music and setting unite to make this a ballet of importance. Yet here is escapism as complete as that of Balanchine's *Orpheus* or Ashton's *Daphnis and Chloe*.

After a brief excursion into witchcraft—*The Witch* (composed for the New York City Ballet and later withdrawn through copy-right difficulties) and a study in period—*Pastorale* (which was prepared rapidly for Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet to take the place of *The Witch*), Cranko continued in this vein with *Pineapple Poll*—his second nautical ballet. This time it was a rollicking romp to the well-tried recipes of Gilbert and Sullivan. The ballet, with its flippant, witty lightheartedness, contrasts strongly to the drama of *Sea Change*.

Pineapple Poll is an important ballet for other reasons than its great success: it marks the close of this exclusively escapist period, and moreover it displays an



"dilemma of a young man with Jungian Shadow"

ability for the control and composition of group movement that was to play such an important part in his later ballets.

REALITY

Without forewarning came *Harlequin in April*: Cranko's first comment upon the problems of reality. Here he presents the difficulties of the idealist who seeks for knowledge, and achieves his desire with the help of the muddler only to discover that the possession of knowledge alone brings with it complete disillusionment: a disillusionment so painful that in the end he has to seek refuge in the world of ignorance and blind innocence from which he emerged in the first instance.

This is a difficult ballet to follow, and has attractions that only become apparent after several visits. The transition that was taking place is clearly shown, and Cranko has drawn on the fairy-tale trappings of the escapist ballet to help him in his symbolic use of plants, unicorns

and characters from the Commedia Dell'Arte.

It was a sympathetic study with great beauty at times, especially in the dances he composed for plants, and the *pas de trois* for the Unicorns and Columbine. The criticism may, however, be made with some justification that the ballet attempted to be too "clever", and lost much of its power as a result of its bright ideas. This "cleverness" has become apparent from time to time in Cranko's work, and is a weakness that will need to be kept in check if the full force of his work is to be felt.

Cranko's next ballet was not exactly a relapse into old methods for it was a sophisticated comic ballet depending for its humour upon the accurate portrayal of the exaggerations of the Edwardian period. Little need be said about this ballet: it served as a creative respite before Cranko finally emerged with his creations of psychological theory in ballet terms—his contribution to the Ballet d'Actualité.

First he produced his study of Narcissism in *Reflection*, which was so contrived and complicated as to be nearly incomprehensible; though the same masterly control of group movement which he displayed in *Pineapple Poll* and *Harlequin in April* was present here. There can be little doubt that he was still attracted by psychology as a subject for ballet, for her shortly followed *Reflection* with a ballet of similar genre: *The Shadow*.

JUNG

Composed for the sister-company at Covent Garden *The Shadow* turns to Jung for its inspiration. Here is presented the dilemma of the young man whose femininity, typified in the ballet by "Romantic Love" (the Anima of Jung), constantly emerges from his unconscious (the Jungian Shadow) and threatens the position of the Young Girl which his masculinity naturally seeks.

The Shadow constantly appears when least expected, and dominates the Young Man with his vision of Romantic Love, until he at last resolves the situation only by seeing his Romantic Love for what she is: a product of the Shadow; only then does he find peace and heart's-ease. This was a daring subject for a ballet, and Cranko presents it in smooth long-flowing movements amidst an atmosphere of the fantastic.

Once the basic idea behind the ballet is grasped it is appreciated how simply he has expressed it.

And finally we have been given *The Lady and The Fool*. Basically, and with great tenderness, Cranko has tried to present the conception that true happiness can only come through simplicity. (An idea already touched upon in *Harlequin in April*).

In this case The Lady finds true love in the simple Fool only after she, herself, has cast off her masks of artificiality. To this theme Cranko has also added one of group conflict (as in Robbins' *The Guests*) and another in the conflict of dual personality (such as he expressed in *The Shadow*).

All this has been mounted in an atmospheric setting similar to *Veneziana*, which does not become the bitter-sweet nature of this work. In fact Cranko has confused his study on human emotions by over-complication.

His presentation of the problems of human emotions is unlike that of Tudor's. He does not use the raw naturalistic methods of *The Pillar of Fire*: as a result of his double vision he guilds the pill of reality with an air of fantasy and remote beauty.

The New Cranko: See page four.

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